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May 14, 2012

Sen. Nofs, Chair  
Senate Energy and Technology Committee

**SUBJECT: SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL NUMBERS 4265 AND 4266**

Dear Members of the Energy and Technology Committee:

As Utilities Director for the City of Midland, I would like to offer support of House Bills 4265 and 4266 as bills that will provide a choice in the management of yard waste.

The City of Midland operates a licensed solid waste facility (landfill) and a composting facility serving Midland County's 80,000+ residents. Midland County is a closed county, which does not allow the import or export of solid waste to or from other counties. In addition to operating the landfill and composting site, the city also operates city residential collection services, household hazardous waste, e-waste collections, and supports a recycling facility at the landfill site to complement the curbside recycling program.

In 2007, we modified our landfill expansion to accommodate active gas collection, recirculation of leachate, and the potential inclusion of yard waste and/or sewage sludge. The design modification was to accommodate production of methane, to fuel our planned energy generation facility. The now completed electric generating facility is designed to produce 3.2 mega watts of electricity at full production. The energy project's core benefit is to reduce energy costs at the city's wastewater and water treatment plants by 35% or \$325,000.00 annually.

By properly incorporating yard waste into our solid waste operation, we can reduce our collection costs and increase the volume of methane gas available for our energy facility. Presently, our landfill utilizing only solid waste generates 400 cubic feet per minute of methane. By incorporating yard waste and the recirculation of landfill leachate, we expect to increase our methane production to 920 cubic feet per minute in the future. This increased production of methane will allow us to increase energy sales by an additional \$800,000 in revenue per year.

A review of our landfill operating costs indicates that by reducing the size of our yard waste composting program we will see a savings of over \$50,000 per year. The reduced size of the

compost operation will greatly reduce air emissions from our site, improving the quality of life for our neighbors.

Presently, the city utilizes dual stream refuse vehicles for the simultaneous collection of yard waste and residential solid waste. This reduces collection costs and large truck traffic through residential areas. While this system works to control costs, vehicles frequently fill one chamber while the other has additional capacity. This requires the truck to break off its collection route early, travel to the landfill for disposal of the waste streams and return to the route in an often inefficient manner. Additionally, dual stream trucks cost from \$40,000 to \$70,000 more than the standard garbage truck. The combining of yard waste and solid waste into a single stream truck will result in a time and money savings for the City. In the first year we anticipate a net savings of \$100,000. By year 2016 savings and increased energy sales are estimated at \$1,200,000 annually.

From a business and environmental perspective, the City of Midland, strongly supports House Bills 4265 and 4266. We support the provision to allow the land filling of yard waste in facilities designed to actively capture methane and utilize it as a sustainable renewable energy.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.



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